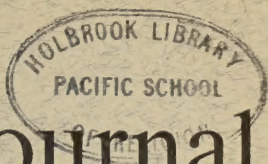


The Indian Journal of Theology



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Our Reformed Heritage and the Arts

B. de KRETZER

The present interest in Church architecture, liturgy, and interior Church 'decor' is making significant and welcome changes in the structure of Protestant Churches. Many of these Churches inherited a tradition which sturdily refused to provide anything more than a somewhat ornate pulpit within the sanctuary—or auditorium as it was sometimes then called. The stress on worship, and a recovery of the Reformers' emphasis on Holy Communion, have played a part in the new developments. It is common now to find the Cross the dominant motif and a large Holy Table with the symbols of the Cup and plates, in the sanctuary. All this is to be welcomed. But the time appears to be ripe to ask the question whether we have followed a sufficiently radical pattern. Few Protestant Churches appear to be willing to place visible expressions of the faith—statues or paintings of the Christ—within the sanctuary. Two-dimensional stained glass windows have been approved (though their high costs make them the exclusive possession of wealthy middle-class communities), but there is a reluctance to introduce the three-dimensional structures. Is there any valid theological justification for this?

The protest against statues and paintings stems from a desire to be faithful to the Old Testament injunction 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness . . .'. It is argued that this commandment forbids us from using any 'material' to express the Divine. Yet this interpretation fails to do justice to the difference between the Old and New Testaments. The commandment forbidding us to seek to express the Divine has special and necessary meaning in the time of the Old Covenant. This is the period of partial revelation, the period of preparation for the full revelation in Jesus Christ. It is because man, in this time, has no adequate knowledge of the True God that the commandment has validity. Man as sinner has no clear vision of the Eternal God and there is no road from 'below' by which we may travel into the heavens and 'see' God. The commandment protects the Holiness of God and warns men against presumptuous sin. But the teachings of the Old Testament receive radical transformation with the coming of Jesus.

In Jesus the 'gap' in our knowledge of God has been filled—from the other side. God Himself has chosen to express His Life

in the flesh, in material form, as Incarnate Lord. He was not an *avatar*, mere appearance, as Hinduism understands every appearance of God in history, but in the most positive way was embodied in history itself. Matter was used of God to reveal God. The Word was made flesh. In much Protestant thought this Incarnational fact has ceased to play the creative rôle which properly belongs to it. Many Protestants are slightly docetic in their understanding of Incarnational truth. They are so much concerned to protect the 'otherness' of God that they do not adequately understand that the Incarnation holds both 'otherness' and 'nearness', the divine and the human, in perfect unity in the Person of Jesus the Christ. It is this incipient doceticism which makes many Protestants reluctant to use the stuff of history, material form, to express Jesus. Yet in this reluctance, they cannot easily refute the charge that they do not take His Manhood seriously.

But the more serious reason for the reluctance stems from the desire to keep the commandment. Actually, of course, it is only in relation to Jesus Christ that the commandment has meaning for the Christian. The old commandment receives a new depth and dynamism in the light of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. If we did not see this, we would be compelled to accept the Muslim charge that we are guilty of idolatry when we worship the One True God in Jesus Christ. But precisely because we do this very thing for us the commandment reads differently. In essence we are warned that worship of any thing or person other than Jesus Christ is forbidden. And conversely, that nothing is idolatrous if it is used to make the worship of God in Jesus Christ more acceptable. Idolatry is no longer the mere 'negative' of Old Testament times, it is that which keeps us from Jesus Christ. And precisely because He was made flesh, the flesh, matter, can be used, in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to express His Image.

The idolatrous temptation to identify the Living God with a 'locus' is present and must be guarded against in the response of man in worship. We have been aware of this danger in our reactions to art and sculpture. But it is a present danger in every form of Christian response. There is a form of Bible faith which identifies the Spirit and the word in idolatrous fashion. Creeds and confessions have also been turned into idols. Decorative texts, so popular in Protestant homes, can become loci with idolatrous overtones. Indeed, wherever men are tempted to stop, *en route* to the Divine, in the material alone, idolatrous imaginings are present. Nevertheless, in spite of this risk, we have to continue to make manifest the Truth of the Word made flesh in a response that is total in character.

The liturgical developments within Protestantism have not, for the most part, been cultivated on the basis of theological understanding. Rather aesthetic reasons have predominated and have served to inform the recent stress on new forms in Church architecture and worship. At the same time, we have not

hesitated to use certain modern techniques, filmstrips, projectors, flannelgraphs, to teach the faith—means not available to the early Church—yet it is hard to see what theological reasons we can summon to support their uses, if we continue to resist the use of the more traditional forms—in art and sculpture—within the sanctuaries.

But this radical new way for Protestantism can only come from a radical new insight into the implications of an Incarnational Theology. Protestant Church life suffers perhaps from a degree of anaemia. It does not take seriously the awesome, yet transforming, fact that God was made man, flesh and blood. If it did, there would be a greater desire to embody the Incarnate Christ in the art and culture of our times, so that those who in this generation search after reality might find it in Him. It could be that in our concern to protect the Holiness of God—wrongly conceived—we have effectively kept him out of the actualities of history. We need to learn how to handle history itself, the matter of which history is made, with reverence. This is much the more difficult task. But it is a task which the Incarnation lays upon us. To worship a child and not commit idolatry is not easy. Yet it is precisely this that our faith requires of us. And it is this which our age yearns to see—Our Flesh in the Godhead—the Godhead in the flesh.

Consequently, the plea for a fresh approach becomes the more imperative because of the imperative need for us to communicate the Gospel to modern man. A Christian artist is enjoined to use the inspiration of the faith to express the Word in art, drama, poetry, song and literature. But it is hard to see how this can be effectively done when within the Church building itself he receives little or no encouragement in this direction. Rather, if he is a sensitive soul, he will be aware of a certain reluctance to admit the 'arts' into the main stream of Christian life. For the average Protestant Christian has inhibitions from a Puritan past which act as a barrier to the spontaneous acceptance and use of 'culture'. This makes it difficult for the artist to find real sources of inspiration and encouragement from within the Christian tradition itself. For unless he sees that his work can be used to the greater glory of God within the sanctuary itself, the Christian artist will have a troubled conscience or go elsewhere for light and counsel.

But it is the ordinary worshipper who must be our primary concern. Men need to 'see' the Word of God. The Incarnation itself makes this plain. When men come to worship, the Church must offer them just this sight—through a total response expressed in Word and Sacrament, and art and form, to the Grace of God in Jesus Christ, seeking in every way to enable men to worship 'as seeing the Invisible'.

‘Do This in Remembrance of Me’

I Corinthians II : 24^b

K. C. MATHEW

Someone has said that the besetting sin of theologians is to decide in advance what a word, phrase or sentence ought to mean and then force facts into their preconceived moulds. The above command of our Lord is a favourite text of those who approach the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with a preconceived view that it is nothing more than a remembrance of the death of Christ. Until recently it has been a common belief that Zwinglie viewed the Lord's Supper as a symbol or memorial of Christ's death and nothing more. But more recent historical research has shown that 'Zwinglie himself was in this respect much less "Zwinglian" than some of his followers; and that for Zwinglie Christ was really, and not merely memorially, present at the Supper'.¹ But a section of the Church in India is at present menaced by the revival of 'Zwinglianism'. As the above command is the rallying point of 'Zwinglianism', we feel that an examination of its real meaning and purpose is *à propos*.

This command is conspicuously absent in all the Gospels except Luke. Many New Testament scholars believe that the Lukan text (22: 19^b-20) is a later insertion based on I Corinthians. Why does Paul alone quote this? The answer is that his polemical purpose in this section demands it. At Corinth the Lord's Supper had degenerated into a mere meal to satisfy hunger and thirst. The Corinthians were indifferent to the spiritual meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper. It is to this gross indifference that he refers when he says, 'Whoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.' For the fruitful participation in the Supper the communicant's attitude should accord with the sacred elements of the Sacrament. It is this attitude that our Lord is emphasizing in this command, 'Do this in remembrance of me'.

¹ Shaw, Macintosh, *Christian Doctrine*, p. 303.

² *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. X, p. 137. *The International Critical Commentary*, I Corinthians, p. 245.

Paul is appealing to the Corinthian Christians on the authority of Christ that the right way to participate in the Lord's Supper is in remembrance of Him. As this command has reference primarily to the subjective condition of the communicant and not to the objective presence of the Lord in the Supper, it is unwarranted to deny the presence of Christ in the Eucharist on the basis of this command.

The above position can be further strengthened by a study of the exact meaning of the Greek preposition *eis* in this command. A. T. Robertson says that its original meaning is precisely the same as *en*. In itself *eis* means only *en* but it made constant inroads on *en* until in modern Greek *eis* has displaced *en*. Hence in the New Testament no hard and fast distinction can be drawn between *eis* and *en*.³ Often *eis* is used where the accusative alone would be clear. Hence Robertson thinks that the theological bearing of this preposition can come only from the context.⁴ For example, the Greek phrase 'εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν' in Acts 2:38b emphasizes the condition of the one who receives Baptism with reference to his sins. The usual translation of it as 'for the forgiveness of your sins' lends itself to the teaching of baptismal regeneration. Forgiveness is an immediate result of repentance. Hence a better rendering of this phrase would be 'in the condition or status of your sins forgiven.' Again, the Greek phrase 'εἰς ὄνομα προφήτου' in Matthew 10:41b emphasizes the mood or spirit with which a prophet should be received. The familiar translation of it as 'in the name of a prophet' is inadequate to express what the Greek phrase really means. A better rendering of it would be 'in the spirit or attitude due to a prophet.' If *eis* in the command, 'Do this in remembrance of me',⁵ is interpreted along this line, the whole command could be translated as follows: 'Do this in the spirit or attitude of remembering me'. The context makes it abundantly clear that remembrance is only the subjective condition of the communicant for the fruitful reception of the holy elements and not the purpose of the whole sacrament.

In the Lord's Supper two parties are involved, Christ and His disciples. 'Do this in remembrance of me' is a command of Christ to His disciples concerning the attitude with which they should participate in this Sacrament. No stretching of imagination is needed to see that this command has to do with something within the disciples' power and not with His presence which is

³ Robertson, A. T., *A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 120.

⁴ Robertson and Davis, *A New Short Grammar of the New Testament*, pp. 255-256.

⁵ The rendering of this command into some of the Indian languages is rather unfortunate. For example, if the Malayalam version of it were translated into English, it would read as follows: 'Do this for the sake of remembering me.' The *padhya* movement in the Mar Thoma Church is probably unduly influenced by it.

beyond their power. Their responsibility is to come to the table with the right preparation and attitude and the command is aimed at this. The limited scope of the command should prevent from reducing the purpose of the whole Sacrament to a mere remembrance. As it is an act of two parties, the purpose can be realized only when both parties act.

If Christ were not different from any other historical person, it would be possible to think of the Lord's Supper as a one party act and responsibility. But He is different from other historical persons in that He rose from the dead and lives today. As He lives today, how can we reduce this Sacrament to a mere one party act of commemoration? In other words, how can we have a memorial of One who is still our life, still present with us and acting in us?⁶ The Lord's Supper is not an act which stops with just remembrance, because 'in the language of the Bible "remember" never concerns the dead past but always the past as breaking into the present.'⁷ The remembrance of all that He has done for us and that He is for us drives us on our knees in repentance and impels us to fall prostrate at His feet in complete surrender. The remembrance leads to the climax of the Sacramental act of our offering ourselves to Him as a 'living sacrifice' in utter gratitude. The very giving of ourselves to Him is a receiving of Him, and the very receiving of Him is already a giving of ourselves. 'Both of these are happening in every single process, in every moment when we are worshipping God; and the supreme instrument and medium of that double movement, all in one, is the Sacrament which we call the Eucharist, or the Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper.'⁸ His giving Himself before our offering ourselves to Him is the 'prevenient' or 'pre-venting' grace. His giving Himself after our offering ourselves to Him is the 'Sacramental grace'. Here grace does not mean, as the Roman Catholics hold, a quasi-material substance that could be infused into the soul through the Sacraments, but simply His personal influence upon us.⁹ The instrumental means of His presence for the 'Sacramental grace' are the bread and wine which are the 'signs' of the body and blood of Christ. We have

⁶ Forsyth, P. T., *The Church and the Sacraments*, p. 229.

⁷ Ward, Marcus, *The Outlines of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 184.

⁸ Baillie, D. M., *The Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 122.

⁹ In this connection an understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is helpful. Peter, John and other disciples were influenced by His incarnate life which did not go on for ever, but came to an end. How are the 'Peters' and 'Johns' of this century influenced by Christ? The answer is 'by the Holy Spirit'. Christ is present with us 'through the Holy Spirit working in the Church by Word and Sacrament.' (Baillie, op. cit., p. 67.) The Holy Spirit has been making Christ's influence relevant and contemporary for all men in every time and place. He uses as instrumental means of Christ's influence 'symbols'. In preaching He uses words (symbols) which appeal to the sense of hearing. In this Sacrament He uses bread and wine (symbols) which appeal to the sense of sight, touch, etc.

not chosen these 'signs', but they were chosen for us by Christ Himself. Therefore, the question, why these 'signs' alone and not something else, is unwarranted.

We have seen how a 'Sacramental backward look' breaks into a rich spiritual experience of the present. But this Sacrament consists of a forward look also. The Lord's Supper is also a foretaste of a fuller and deeper fellowship with Christ in His consummated Kingdom.

Therefore, 'remembrance' in the Lord's Supper is a 'Sacramental remembrance' in which past, present, and future are inseparably united, because the One remembered is the same yesterday, today and forever. It is an act pregnant with all the meanings and results given above. Any attempt to reduce it to 'mere remembrance' will rob such a rich act of worship of its intended meanings and will be a disservice to Christ and His Church.

THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

It is hoped that a conference called 'The Indian Theological Conference' will be held in September, 1960. Those who are interested should write to Dr. P. David, Gurukul, Madras 10. The theme of the Conference has not finally been decided. In previous conferences the theme was Christology. It is suggested that the Christian Doctrine of Man may be the theme of the coming Conference. Further details will be given shortly.

The Study of Church History

B. MANUEL

The subject-matter of Church History is Christ, His Church and Christianity: and therefore the study of Church History naturally raises for us the whole vital question of the relevance of Christ, His Church and Christianity for India. Further, the study of Church History is made all the more significant because it focuses our attention in a most important way on certain confusions which have arisen in the minds of thoughtful men, Christian and non-Christian, in India, among whom the following ideas relating to Christianity are becoming rapidly articles of faith:

1. Jesus Christ was a great religious Teacher, a venerable Bhakta, a noble Prophet, the ideal Yogin, a great Guru: One who realized God in Himself and therefore was enabled to manifest God to others. He certainly is one of the many revelations of Godhead through Manhood for mankind.

2. The Church is a human invention (mind-conceived and man-made) that was imposed upon the followers of Christ.

3. Christianity is totally foreign to the spiritual ethos of India, because it represents a view of life and a way of life which are peculiarly the view of life and the way of people who live in Western Europe.

4. In any case, both from the point of view of philosophical Truth and religious experience, all religions in their origin emanate from, and, therefore, in their destiny end up in, the One Supreme All-transcending Reality.

The result of such growing convictions is (i) that there is respect for the teachings of Christ as found in the Gospel accounts and interpreted in the Epistles of the New Testament, (ii) there is very often a conscious attempt to carry out the teachings of Jesus Christ in their personal life but (iii) there is an outright rejection of the Church as something that is totally foreign to the mind of Christ and as something that cannot be fitted into the Hindu rites and ceremonies, dogmas and institutions, (iv) along with this rejection of the Christian Church as an institution (i.e. a socio-religious entity), there is a condemnation of Christianity as something that is utterly foreign to the mind and heart of the people of this land.

This has led many people in India to distinguish between

the pure and simple Jesus-cult (like the Ramakrishna-cult) without the trappings on the one hand of *Churchianity* which is the institutional version (stamped through and through with legality and authoritarianism) of a race, not of India, with rites and ceremonies of religion belonging to the Anglo-Saxon appropriation of the Hebraic-Graeco-Roman experience of religion; and, on the other hand, of *Christianity* which represents a view of life and a way of life of a people who grew up in every way without any reference to other spiritual inheritance and spiritual longings except that of the Mediterranean world.

EASTERN AND WESTERN VIEWPOINTS

For illustrating this, I mention two of the foremost exponents of World Culture, the one in terms of Western culture and the other in terms of Indian culture. I refer to Christopher Dawson and our own Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the greatest living exponent and interpreter of the Sanatana Dharma of Hinduism both in India and abroad.

‘Any study of religion which ignores and leaves on one side the accumulated experience of the Christian past and looks exclusively to the remote and partially incomprehensible evidence derived from the study of alien religious traditions or even to our own abstract notions of the nature of religion and the conditions of religious knowledge is bound to be not merely incomplete but insubstantial and unreal.’

Christopher Dawson can well afford to say this in his *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, because for him the significance of the Western development (Chapter I of the book) is to be seen in the two-fold conviction that (i) there is a far greater material for the study of Western culture (when compared with any other) and the knowledge of such a culture is more intimate and internal. ‘Western culture has been the atmosphere we breathe and the life we live; it is our way of life and the way of life of our ancestors. We know it not merely by documents and monuments, but from our personal experience’ (p. 3). (ii) In Christianity the religious development can be traced from the beginning to the end in the full light of history. He says: ‘We know the historical environment in which Christianity first arose; we possess the letters of the founders of the Churches to the first Christian communities of Europe, and we can trace in detail the successive stages by which the new religion penetrated the West’ (p. 4). In other words, the vital subject of the creative interaction of religion and culture in the life of Western society can be studied objectively as an existential reality. When Lord Acton said, ‘Religion is the key of history’, it means naturally for a Westerner ‘the clue to History is Jesus Christ’.

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan great spiritual revivals occur through the fusion of different traditions. To Dr. Radhakrishnan also the meeting of the East and West today may produce a

spiritual renaissance. Today the world is groping not for the narrow, stunted religion of dogmatic schools, not one of fanaticism that is afraid of the light, but for a creative spiritual religion (*East and West : Some Reflections*, p. 121). European History is the history of a series of renaissances, and behind the everchanging pattern of Western culture there is a living faith which provided Europe with a certain sense of spiritual community. He also reminds us of the fact that the vital function of religion is continuity, conservation and creativity.

Dr. Radhakrishnan says: When we speak of a historic culture we refer to the norms and beliefs which sustain it, the spiritual forces which determine the social framework. The very name Hindu India, Buddhist Asia, Western Christendom or Islamic Society suggests that spiritual traditions, philosophies of life underlie each society (*East and West : Some Reflections*, p. 17). But, he asserts, Truth is of the universal order. Beliefs and dogmas belong to the contingent order and, as such, are variable and changing while Truth is eternal and changeless. Truth itself is beyond the expression that can be found for it, therefore, there can be no perfect formulation of Truth (p. 25). Rites and ceremonies, systems and dogmas are not to be mistaken for Absolute Truth. They indicate but do not define Reality or confine Reality. 'The sign should not be mistaken for the thing signified. The signpost is not the destination' (p. 26). Dr. Radhakrishnan pleads that 'Christianity which is already "debtor both to Greeks and Barbarians" may gain considerably by the insights of Eastern Religion.' The inherited spiritual tradition of India must be reconciled with the acquired Christian doctrines.

I mention these two authors (not because I claim to have made an exhaustive study of their writings) but because to me they represent the specifically characteristic views of (i) those who are steeped in Western Christendom with its Gospel, Creed, Church, Cultus, and Culture ; (ii) those who are equally steeped in Hinduism with its Vedanta, Creed, Society, Cultus, and Culture. To the Christian historian it would be natural enough (as in the case of Christopher Dawson) to accept Dr. Latourette's definition: The history of Christianity is the history of what God has done for man through Christ and of man's response. Again, for a Christian this means 'seeing the history of Christianity in its relation to the total story of mankind'. But to the non-Christian like Dr. Radhakrishnan, the B.C.-A.D. division of secular history means not for all, but only to the Westerner, a new era, a new vision, a new venture, because of the Great Act of God in Christ. He would agree readily that 'religion is the way to all history' but would not subscribe to the Christian conviction that the clue to all history is to be found only in the Person and the Work of Christ and the continuing of the Person and the Work of Christ in the Church which is the sphere here and now of the operation of the ever-present creative, redeeming and sanctifying activity of God the Holy Spirit.

At the commencement of this essay I pointed out that the subject-matter of Church History is Christ, His Church, Christianity. It was also pointed out that for many Hindus and some Christians Christ, the seer, the mystic, the realizer of God, the son of God, an Incarnate deity, seems readily to be relevant to India for He can be fitted into the spirituality of Hinduism. Because in Christ as in Rama, or Krishna, or in more recent times (emphasizing historical reality) in Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo, we have God, we see God, we hear God, we experience God. But the Christian claim that the Church, the Body of Christ, is the only sphere of the realization of the true God then and now is anathema to them, because to them Church means the mere ecclesiastical polity of the Christians and as such they see it as a mere organization of the Christian Religion and *not* the Organism of the ever-present Living God. Naturally, they conclude that Christianity represents only the spiritual experience of the Western people, representing their philosophy of the spirituality underlying their total set-up of life within the confines of Western Christendom. This is because a distinction is made between the philosophical approach to the realization of the spirituality of man and the theological approach to the realization of God in Christ and the ecclesiastical approach to the appropriation of God in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in and through the Sacraments of the Church.

It is in this context that we must discuss the question of the relevance of Church History to India today. Further, I have heard it said by Indian Christians, (i) You have given us Jesus Christ. Why don't you leave us with Him and leave Him to us and allow Him to work out in us the purpose for us and through us to the world? Why do you bother us with Churchianity and Christianity within which you have confined Christ the Liberator? (ii) We are prepared to share with all Christians and work towards the destiny that awaits us even as we learn to grow up in Christ, grow up into the fulness of the stature of Christ, but how can we have a share in your spiritual heritage without having a share in our own spiritual heritage? (iii) An ordinand looking at the chart at the end of Lefever's 'History of the Reformation' refused point blank to be enthusiastic about the great heritage that is ours in the Church in India because of the various experiences and expositions of Christ we have received. I readily sympathized with him because the whole chart was one-sided. It was only a partial heritage philosophically, theologically and ecclesiastically speaking. (iv) When the C.S.I. was inaugurated there was naturally great rejoicing because of the Anglican, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian heritages that were being pooled together and poured into an emerging ecclesiastical pattern. Not very long ago I heard that now they no longer think in terms of ex-Anglican, ex-Methodist, etc., but Anglican

plus, Methodist plus, etc. But in either case, we see again an appropriation of the ecclesiastical pattern of Christian life without any conscious reference to the spirituality of the people of the region with their personal theism full of loving devotion and Bhakti, as in Ramanuja, the piety of the Thirukural and the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Yet, in spite of all that has been said so far, books like that of Bishop Walsh's *Lights and Shades of Christendom*, *The Heritage of the Indian Christian* by Sister Gertrude, the books of Godfrey Phillips and the slogan, 'The Younger Churches of Today are living through the experience of the Early Church', have attempted to show the relevance of Church History for India, but Church History can become really relevant to India only if it is taught as a summary of the entire history of Christianity beginning from the Church of Jehovah through the Redeemer Christ to the Church of the Jews, and thereafter beginning from Jerusalem unto the uttermost part of the earth. But the uttermost part of the earth does not terminate in the Mediterranean world winding up in Alexandrian, Antiochan and Byzantine Christianity. Nor does it terminate at Rome; nor does it terminate at the Council of Trent; nor does it terminate in Germany; nor does it terminate in London; nor does it terminate in New York.

The relevance of Church History to India is lessened because of cultural, political, national and ecclesiastical, not to mention the overall cultural termini (or ends), that have been taken to mean the uttermost part of the earth. Church History as it is taught and examined today is no more than the teaching and examination of the rise and development of Christianity in Western Christendom with grudging courtesy paid to the Eastern Churches and Indian Church History tagged on as a resultant of the commercial, political and adventurous enterprise of Christian peoples for whom ways and means were opened to propagate the Christian Faith in non-European lands. The result was a faithful reproduction of little denominational enclaves, with little catechetical schools and theological institutions into which were transplanted (though I readily see nothing else could have been done then) denominational doctrinal teachings. The result was that Church History was taught more and more to justify certain denominations. Ecclesiastical teaching of Church History is totally irrelevant to India though I believe it is absolutely relevant in the West.

The textbooks that we use for Church History are all right for those who understood Greek and Roman History, the rise and fall of mediaeval Europe and the history of the nation states of Modern Europe. Such books naturally give the impression that Church History is nothing but the study of Christianity and the

rise of Western culture or the origin, development and present state of Western Christendom.

All that I have sketched so far (very sketchy and certainly most elementary) is to suggest that we should distinguish between Christ, Christianity and the Church within the context of the Mediterranean world and Christ, Christianity and the Church within the context of mankind in the world. In this way we can be helped to distinguish between the *ecclesiology of the mission of the Church* and the *theology of the mission of the Church*.

To my mind, our inability in most cases and our unwillingness in some cases, to distinguish clearly the ecclesiastical pattern of the Church with its ecclesiastical expansion and the theological pattern of the Church with the spread of the Gospel of Christ is largely due to the way in which we approach the whole question of 'A History of Christianity'.

The study of Church History for us means only tracing the growth and development of Christianity in all its aspects from its days of Judaeo-Christian beginnings to the modern era through successive stages of Judaic Christianity, Gentile Christianity, East and West Gentile Christianity, Latin Christianity, Mediterranean Christianity, European Christianity (here we distinguish more clearly between Latin, Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon types) and the modern world Christianity (ways of modern European Missionary enterprises).

PARTIAL DEVELOPMENT OR WHOLE VISION ?

This has made us theologically, ecclesiastically, doctrinally and liturgically conditioned mostly by the Graeco-Roman world and its culture, though at times we like to say that after all the Hebraic elements of Christianity are there: our Old Testament is a constant reminder of this. We have mistaken a partial development in Christianity for its full, final and definitive development. We fail to realize the fact that wherever we might be, to whatever race we may belong, we have to say both collectively and individually, 'Without us they cannot be made perfect'. But what is happening today is that on the part of non-European peoples the saying, 'Without us you cannot be made perfect' seems to have been heeded to a good deal, and increasingly so on the part of the makers of the Western politico-social structure of society, because it becomes clear more and more on either side of the division today (between East and West) that 'without us they cannot be made perfect'. Alas, this is not so in the Church of the West. The makers and guardians of the Western Church have a much greater (and shall we say keener) sense of proprietorship in matters theological and ecclesiastical. They seem to say to the Christians of the non-European races, 'without us you cannot be made perfect', but never 'without you we cannot be made perfect'. How can there be real communication between a Gospel which has been hardened by a partial development and

those who have received the Gospel and are beginning to realize that they must learn more and more what it is for them to communicate this Gospel to their fellow-members who live by their faith in *living* non-Christian religions. This is because we do not recognize that Perfection theologically speaking belongs to the very Being of God, whereas doctrinally and liturgically speaking perfection belongs to the realm of believing and becoming. To my mind it is because of a confusion in the theology between Being, Becoming and Believing that the History of Christianity seems to be more and more the expansion and spread of the Western peoples whose religion is Christianity. The God of the Christians has come to mean today, and rightly too (because of the one-sided development of Christianity, i.e. without reference to any religious experience or philosophical thought outside the Graeco-Roman milieu), the God of the Western or European nations, nationally conceived, ecclesiastically interpreted and doctrinally justified, in order to suit the convenience of the expansion of the Western peoples with their growingly better-equipped culture for material advancement.

The negative, and often sneering superior attitude to the other religions on the part of Christians, Indian and non-Indian, is a faithful reflection of a state of mind and heart which refuses to understand that to behold the Glory and Truth of the Word made flesh, Christ must re-incarnate Himself through His Church in lands other than the West. Then and then only Hebrew-Greek-Latin Christianity can become what it was meant to be in the wisdom of God, Christ-in-humanity.

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Theology and the Existentialist Viewpoint

G. W. PECK

Few if any movements in philosophy have had more influence upon modern Western theology than that described somewhat loosely as 'existentialism'. One possible reaction to the extent of this influence (indeed to the fact that there has been any influence at all) would be to assert that, as in former times, so again now the sacred treasure of the Gospel has been despoiled by an attempt to encase it within the transient framework of a passing fad in human thought. Yet to react in this way would be to fail to take adequate cognizance of the extent to which there are in fact points of contact between what might be called 'Apostolic Christianity' and the existentialist way of looking at things, which are fundamental to each. It would further be to fail to appreciate that existentialism is for the most part not so much an attempt to construct another philosophical 'world view' destined finally to depart with the age which gave it birth into the gloomy portals of history that is merely past, as it is the expression of a determination to provide in language and through concepts of perennial relevance a realistic analysis of the actual, constitutive characteristics of the human situation. Existentialism proclaims the rediscovery and the reaffirmation of the human individual, and of his essential and total involvement in the life which he himself must live and which he shares in common with his fellows. It is concerned, in other words, with a view of man which at its heart is identical with that which has always been one of the primary preoccupations of Christian thought and practice, a view in which man is made to stand out in the starkness of his particularity, in the futility of his finitude, and in the depth of his need to conquer death and attain to the life everlasting.

Nothing brings out this emphasis in existentialism more plainly than a survey of its place in the history of philosophy; and indeed, it must be regarded as doubtful whether any completely adequate comprehension of the full significance of the existentialist viewpoint can be obtained without an initial consideration of the philosophical antecedents against which the movement is historically set. And further, when it comes to be understood in

its historical environment, and grasped as a vital personal and philosophical reaction against one of the most ruthless 'dehumanization' processes of all time, every attempt to characterize its influence upon theology as that of an out-size morsel of secular leaven in an otherwise untainted lump of revelational dough must fall to the ground.¹ For the two will then be seen to be related essentially, and not to have been pressed arbitrarily into an unholy alliance. Because existentialism is what it is historically, and because theology is itself involved in history, the cross fertilization of the one by the other may be taken as having been from the beginning intellectually and spiritually inevitable.

I

The existentialists, as a recent writer has put it, take their place 'among the diverse and quarrelsome progeny of Kant.' But their origins can best be understood not so much by reference directly to Kant as by reference to some subsequent members of the Kantian family tree, in particular to Hegel and the school of German idealism. Towards the end of his life Kant knew that an interpretation of certain crucial features of his Critical Philosophy was being projected (especially by Fichte) which radically contradicted some of his fundamental assumptions and findings. He expostulated bitterly against his 'so-called friends', but to no avail. He had insisted upon the unquestionable reality of the world given in sense experience, and upon the essential limitation of the range of pure reason, yet he came to be deemed the father of German Absolute Idealism, and upon foundations allegedly laid by him his illegitimate children constructed systems of which he would never have dreamed. Kant had apparently left unresolved certain significant dualisms, and he had ascribed to the understanding a new and striking function in the construction not only of our knowledge of the world but also of the world itself as it is posited in judgment. And whether he approved of it or not on these bases his successors were determined to erect an ultimate metaphysic precisely similar to that which he had pronounced both illusory and vain.

Hegel overcame the dualism which Kant had allegedly left by what was in the end a simple but effective device—unilateral absorption. He proclaimed the unity of thought and being, but it was a unity achieved not so much by mutual agreement as by forceful conquest, thought emerging as the conqueror. Indeed, what actually happened was that being disappeared altogether. Only its name remained. Rejecting the warnings of Kant, Hegel held that there is nothing fundamentally wrong in assuming that, from the very fact that something is being thought, it is being known in itself, and with the distinctive significance of existence

¹ It should be noted also that at least in the case of Kierkegaard the reaction had a distinctively religious aspect as well.

thus disposed of, there was no obstacle in the way of devising a system which included in itself every conceivable thing and event. All problems were solved—God, man, the universe, had become transparent to thought. Everything, even the subtlest manifestations of human experience in art, ethics, and religion, could be allowed for and given their appropriate and logically necessary place in the totality of the Absolute. The problem was, of course, that in so far as the whole process involved at the outset a gigantic abstraction which left actuality out of the picture altogether, it was compelled throughout its course to move wholly in the realm of pure thought. It was in this way that the perpetual overcoming of contradictions in the ‘Dialectic’ was made possible; for in abstraction there are no real contradictions at all, everything being given at once. Hegel himself seems not to have been aware that so colossal a defect was present in his system—indeed he took pains to protest vigorously against all philosophical thinking which was purely abstract, and maintained that his doctrine was instead the very essence of concreteness. But even this much vaunted concreteness of the Hegelian philosophy was itself the product of sheer abstraction. For to Hegel ‘concreteness’ was always associated with essences or concepts and consisted simply in ‘the totality of their interrelated and mutually determining constituent determinations’²—in other words, in the entirety of the system of their relations. Concreteness was therefore characteristic only of system and *the* concrete was *the* System, the Absolute. And the Absolute was conceived as the objectification of the Ultimate Mind, the product of a logic which had ceased to be the logic of thinking and had become instead ‘the immanent movements of Being.’³ If the completeness of the Hegelian abstraction is revealed in anything, it is in the connection thus established between concreteness and logic, a connection which is not so much one of analogy as of identity.

II

It was precisely this element of abstraction which is at the heart of all idealism of the Hegelian type which provided the focal point for the existentialist reaction. They opposed it in the first place as a fundamental general principle of philosophy, and, more significantly, in the second place, as it was applied explicitly and implicitly to a particular problem—the nature and place in the system of the human individual. For Hegel self-consciousness is to be interpreted exclusively from the point of view of its rationality, and the individual mind is exhibited in line with this as no more than a function or expression of Universal Reason. Indeed in the System the individual counts for very little, if anything at all, since he, along with every other existent and particular entity,

² E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, p. 135.

³ H. J. Blackham, *Six Existentialist Thinkers*, p. 2.

has been taken up into the all-absorbing categories of the rational and the universal, and his individuality, particularity, and actuality have ceased to signify anything like those characteristics which are normally assumed to be fundamental constituents of his being. In other words, in the construction of the Absolute Hegel had effected the obliteration of the reality of the human subject both as an actually existing individual and as one whose lot is essentially cast in the world of time, becoming, and change. The individual had gone, both as an object and as a subject, his finitude, his concreteness, and his responsibility lost in a cold, dead sea of abstraction. To men like Kierkegaard, who must be classed as the initiator of the existentialist way of thinking in modern times, this was not a matter merely for philosophical quibbling. It was a tragedy of major proportions whose possible consequences in human relationships and individual experience were difficult to calculate. And there can be no doubt that in religion, politics, and international affairs the effects and results of the Hegelian way of thinking have more than justified the fears which it engendered in the few who at the time of its propagation had the moral and intellectual perception and courage to resist its all-conquering progress.

III

It is only against the background which has here been suggested that the distinctive emphases of existentialism as a general movement of thought and life can be adequately understood and appreciated. Taken in itself existentialism is diverse at once in both doctrine and personality, long drawn-out in time (from Kierkegaard to Sartre), and supremely difficult to summarize. Yet it possesses a unity in its diversity which centres primarily in certain fundamental tenets which have been enunciated chiefly in opposition to just that kind of thought which we have been describing. Its unity may in other words be said to consist in its consistent rejection of any attempt by Hegelianism and kindred philosophies and world-views to do away with the actuality and particularity of the existent, especially the human existent, by assimilating it into something other than itself. Theistic, non-theistic, and atheistic existentialists stand firmly together on this point, and their solidarity here is not in the least affected by the marked differences which exist among them in other respects.

Existentialism begins, not with the 'I think' of idealism, but with its own distinctive 'I exist' or 'I live'. Man is not to be eliminated as an individual by being described as simply the product of the engrafting of an Absolute Consciousness upon a restricting sentient organism. He is one, particular, and unique, living and acting out of a centre of spontaneity within a concrete environment. 'What really exists and counts,' says Gabriel Marcel, 'is this particular individual, the real individual which I am, with the incredibly subtle structure of his experience, with all

the special features of the concrete adventure which it is incumbent on him, and on him alone, to live out.⁴ With due respect to Hegel, how could all this conceivably be deduced from some abstract rational concept? We are concerned in the here-and-now not with the pseudo-reality of the so-called 'concrete universal', but with the actual reality of the concrete individual. And this concrete individual is perpetually and inescapably involved in the actualities of his existence. Even in his thought he cannot ever step out of existence into some abstract world, for his very thought itself is essentially bound up with his existence. So that the perspective so dear to the speculative philosopher is forever denied him, despite his best efforts to achieve it. Existentialism is thus 'an attempt at philosophy from the standpoint of the actor, instead of, as has been customary, from that of the spectator.'⁵ We must come to grips with the human situation as one in which we are actually involved, a situation characterized by our finitude, estrangement, ignorance, and despair. And if coming to grips with it means anything, it means participating in it, with the whole of our existence—not just with rationality, which implies detachment, but with all our temporal, spatial, historical, psychological, sociological and biological conditions. For the fundamental issues confronting the human reality are not such as can be regarded with disinterest. They are matters of passionate concern, questions of the very basis of our being, and require accordingly our whole-hearted involvement in the search for what becomes when it is apprehended *our* truth and *our* meaning. 'The human quest is prompted by the heat, confusion, and mortal anguish of one struggling in the mêlée, not by the detached interest of the umpire whose seat lifts him high above the struggle.'⁶ Detachment and disinterested objectivity are not only out of place, and unable to provide us with what we need; they involve a radical denial of one of the crucial, constitutive elements in the situation. The truth that is sought is simply not of the kind which can be grasped from an abstract point of view. For in our quest we are not like the mathematician who abstractly seeks to prove his theorem or to solve his equation. We are rather like the drowning man who in the passion of despair strives to reach the life-belt. If we confront the problem of God it is because in our anxiety we seek a ground for security. If we turn to the question of immortality it is because we are overwhelmed by the certainty of our own death. If it is the truth of an object which we seek, it is just as much, even more, the truth for a subject, that subject which we are ourselves. And there is involved in this kind of truth an intimacy of appropriation which excludes on the one hand the objectivity of the demonstrable, and on the other hand the interminable suspension

⁴ Quoted by H. Kuhn, *Encounter With Nothingness*, p. 46.

⁵ E. L. Allen, *Existentialism from Within*, p. 3.

⁶ H. Kuhn, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

of decision essentially associated with the search for final proof. The existentialist thinker, 'the actual, living, striving person whose thought is embedded in his life, is indeed part of the process of living',⁷ cannot afford either to postpone the problems till he has the time to grapple with them or to withhold affirmation until he has obtained indefeasible evidence. In the depths of his subjectivity he has to make up his mind and effect a commitment which will enable him to live through the uncertainty and anxiety of this present hour with fortitude, determination, and, it may be, with hope.

IV

'Our point of departure', writes Jean-Paul Sartre, assuming the rôle of spokesman for existentialists generally, 'is . . . the subjectivity of the individual . . .'.⁸ Historically it was in the first instance their point of departure from the all-engulfing Absolute of the Hegelians, and from the dread capacity of pure thought to nullify all distinctions and destroy all particulars in the featureless unity of its universals. And theologically it has provided for some of the thinkers of the Church a point of departure from every system of thought-fashion which has tended to submerge in any way whatever the reality of the obligation and responsibility resting upon every individual as an individual to make on his own account an absolute decision. It cannot be regarded as fortuitous that theology has found in the heat of existentialism's polemic principles which have provided for it some of its most powerful and fruitful stimuli. It is not by chance that Bultmann can say of Heidegger that his 'existentialist analysis of the ontological structure of being would seem to be no more than a secularized, philosophical version of the New Testament view of human life'.⁹ In a significant sense Christian theology and existentialist philosophy are concerned at least on one level with precisely the same thing—with the human individual both in the reality of his ontological situation as a self-conscious, finite being, and in the condition of decisive responsibility into which he enters when he emerges, awakened, from subjection to the influence of the corporate security of his group into an awareness of himself as he is, and as he will and ought to be. If theology today must be influenced by any movement of secular thought (and there is a sense in which it cannot avoid some influence of that kind unless it is to withdraw itself from the world altogether) it could have chosen no better source from which to receive stimulation than existentialism. For it is certain that under its influence it will hardly be allowed ever to forget that Christianity

⁷ E. L. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁸ J.-P. Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism* (tr. P. Mairet), p. 44.

⁹ R. Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth* (ed. H. W. Bartsch ; tr. R. H. Fuller), p. 24.

is at its heart not so much an affair of philosophy or of reason as of personal faith, passion, and commitment; and I suppose if there has been anything that organized and intellectual Christianity has been most prone to forget throughout its history it is just that. To dull the sharpness of the paradoxes of faith beneath a cushion of apparent rationality, to obscure for the individual the imperative of the call to decisive choice, and to absorb him then into a collective both of belief and of order—these have always been among the saddest and most dangerous tendencies that the historical Church has manifest. And to have made at least some of the Church's thinkers plainly aware of these tendencies and of their tragic potentialities may well prove in the end to have been the most valuable and long-lasting result of the contribution that existentialism has made to theology.

VISUAL AIDS

'Anybody who makes an image of a man or a bird or a reptile or any other created thing and treats it as though it were God, falls under anathema. But the contempt of the material because it is material is a Manichaeian error. Scripture testifies against the forbidding of the use of material things as a help to the worship of God.'

ST. JOHN of Damascus

Review Article

HOLINESS AND CULTURE

J. G. ARAPURA

It is a pleasure to introduce this good book to readers, as it was a pleasure to read through it.* The jacket says that Mr. Pelikan, Professor of Historical Theology in the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, is one of the distinguished younger scholars of America. A reading of this book will confirm the description that he is distinguished.

The book is essentially a critique of value, that is of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. In fact it is a critique of value from the standpoint of the Holy. The subject-matter of the book is the central ideas of six thinkers, Kierkegaard, Paul, Dostoevsky, Luther, Nietzsche, Bach, each of whom have pointed up 'either the impossibility of equating the Holy with one or another value, or the necessity of subjecting all values to the Holy' (p. ix).

Of these six men, Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky and Nietzsche were clinically insane and because of their very insanity gained insights into the nature of the Holy and knew that it was impossible to domesticate God in a value; the other three, Paul, Luther and Bach, who were not mad in the clinical sense, still 'evidenced madness of the Holy', and represent, so to say, the other side of the relation between God and value: every value has to be subordinated to God, thus allowing value to be reshaped by the Holy.

As the author presents it, each one of these thinkers evidence an identical pattern of development: in his early stages each somehow equated one value or another with God, by treating the ultimate or absolute of that value as the same as God the absolute, but they all reached a point where this equation broke down, as the result, surely, of a direct confrontation with the Holy, and thenceforward began ruthlessly to demolish all of his former equation. They all gave testimony to the utter otherness of the Holy, of God.

KIERKEGAARD

Kierkegaard is studied in the context of the *hubris* of systematic theology. 'To the extent that Christian thought has fallen

**Human Culture and the Holy* by Jaroslav Pelikan. S.C.M. 15/-, pp. 172. (Available through Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 5 Russell Street, Calcutta.)

into this (Greek) fallacy of equating knowledge and virtue, it has thereby committed the error of identifying the Holy and the True. It has assumed that a knowledge of certain truths about God provided the knower with a relationship to God he could not otherwise secure, and has made the inoculation of such knowledge its principal aim and purpose' (p. 12). The author tells us that in this kind of confidence in knowledge Christian thought surpassed even the Greek and 'became more guilty of the *hubris* in Greek philosophy than that philosophy itself had been' (p. 12). 'To Søren Kierkegaard must go the distinction of having penetrated more deeply than any other Christian thinker, at least since Luther, into the subtle fallacy of identifying the Holy and the True' (pp. 12-13). Kierkegaard 'had been brought up in a tradition that promised absolute intellectual assurance to its adherents.' To this was added Hegelianism that was, if anything, more extravagant in its claims' (p. 25). This assurance was taken to be 'God's means of granting the certainty of salvation'. But, although Kierkegaard himself disliked systematic theology in any form, the author here suggests that there are ways in which systematic theology can be pursued without lending itself to *hubris*. Thus 'Kierkegaard's realization that the Holy cannot and dare not be identified with the True is a necessary prerequisite for thought and work in systematic theology' (p. 26). As a matter of fact what Kierkegaard has to say relates to the problem of systematic theology; and the burden of his thought is 'the impossibility of thinking from the True to the Holy' (p. 27).

PAUL

In the essay on Paul, the author deals with the problem of thinking from the Holy to the True, which is the constructive problem of theological method. This reversal of procedure is necessary if systematic theology is to be really Christian. Paul had been exposed to the True in Greek thought and to the law in Jewish religion. 'Tempted though he may have been to find a Christ in truth, that is to find the ultimate fulfilment of his existence in the possession of Greek wisdom or Jewish revelation, he nevertheless went beyond the truth of both to the truth which he had found in Christ' (p. 33). But, the author tells us that Paul takes us beyond this. If the first two chapters of Romans impress upon us the impossibility of going through truth to Christ, through the True to the Holy, 'because the truth of law and the truth of being issued only in despair and wrath,' the eighth chapter assures us, 'that given the truth in Christ and the redemption which He offered, somehow all other truth became meaningful, for He was the Lord at whose name every knee had to bow' (p. 48). 'Not through the True to the Holy, then, but given the Holy in Christ, there was no True which did not acquire, by reflected light at least, a radiance and a glory' (pp. 48-49). In this very connection Mr. Pelikan is a little critical of Barth and Brunner. Thus he

writes, 'Whatever one may term it and whatever one may seek to do with it, the plot of the eighth chapter of Romans did contain the makings for an ontology of the second article, asserting as it did that what Christ had assumed was "the likeness of sinful flesh"' (p. 49). But this was expressed by Paul and by others, in 'that almost hymnic period', in liturgy, for 'some of the most profound statements of the Christian faith have been not dogmatic, but liturgical' (p. 51).

Although the True does not lead to the Holy, the Holy leads to the fulness of truth. 'Almost everything which the searchers for truth have tried to find in an equation of the Holy and the True (and more) is available to those who spurn such an equation and seek instead to find the True only dedicating themselves completely to the Holy' (pp. 54-55).

DOSTOEVSKY

In Dostoevsky and Luther we find the Holy ranged against the Good, just as in Kierkegaard and Paul the Holy was pitted against the True. Like the True, the Good has been taken by many as the same as God or the Holy. 'This is the danger confronting anyone who devotes himself to the implications of the Christian faith for the problem of life rather than of thought' (p. 57). Moralism and pietism have always been peculiarly susceptible to this danger, although they, especially the latter, have been perfectly legitimate developments which have 'arisen in protest against a dead orthodoxy' and against barren intellectualism. And although the Good pertains to the practical religion rather than to theological thought, in fact it can, like the True, be traced to Greek philosophy and it has been extremely important in the history of philosophy and theology. Besides it has worked itself into thought and language so completely as to change even the meaning of the word 'holy' into the 'morally good'. Reference is made in this connection to Rudolph Otto's work in establishing the distinctiveness of the Holy as an *à priori* category.

The chapter on Dostoevsky describes the great Russian's discovery 'that sin was primarily not a moral, but a religious fact' (p. 72). Sin is 'the assumption: I am God' (p. 74). Some of the famous characters of Dostoevsky are brought to bear on this. Especially of the Grand Inquisitor he says 'The story of the Grand Inquisitor is easily one of the most profound parables in all literature, and there are many aspects of the faith it enlightens. It is a terrible denunciation of moralism . . .' (p. 78). Some observations of the author about Dostoevsky are so penetrating that they ought to be quoted for the sake of appreciation. 'The ultimate and most profound critique of the identification of the Holy and the Good comes in the realization that the demonic in man transcends the moral sense and the ethical consciousness' (p. 81). 'As a matter of fact accepting and living up to a (moral) code can be and

often is the device by which the demonic ego defends its autonomy against the claims which the Holy lays upon it' (pp. 81-89). 'Dostoevsky may have been mad, but just for that reason he saw through the mask of moralism covering the identification of the Holy and the Good and recognized it as a mark of the Anti-christ' (p. 82).

LUTHER

The discussion on Luther is the sequel to the foregoing. It is observed, 'Though an identification of the Holy and the Good leads to moralism, the Holy does create its own distinctive category of the Good, even as it sets its own particular qualifying mark upon both the True and the Beautiful' (p. 85). The mediaeval tendency to make a God out of goodness was in Luther's eyes one of the basic heresies. After rejecting moralism Luther 'posited a morality in which goodness was absorbed into holiness and thus raised to a higher power' (p. 99). Luther's ethic was, in the words of Mr. Pelikan, an 'ethic of the first commandment'. That which we should really counterpose to sin is not goodness, following the mediaeval fashion, but faith. And faith is not another form of righteousness, but obedience. 'It was obedience to the God who forgave sin, an obedience that accepted the Good from the Source of all Good because it had no good of its own to offer' (p. 99). 'For Luther, the Good became the Holy not by an idolatrous identification of the two, but by inclusion in the obedience of faith' (p. 99). This realization of the genesis of true Good in the Holy required for Luther 'a thorough re-interpretation of the Good as it worked itself out in the context of nature and history' (p. 117).

NIETZSCHE

Nietzsche and Bach are discussed in the context of the effort in history to absorb the Holy into Beauty. 'Like moralism and intellectualism, aestheticism gained currency among the Greeks' (p. 118). 'Greek tragedy embodied the best that Greece was able to discover about the paradox of human life in its relation to the ultimates under which it is lived' (p. 119). This aestheticism of the Greeks persisted in the West and entered into the Christian tradition. 'As Greek Philosophy provided the metaphysical framework within which much of Christian theology was cast, so Greek drama was instrumental in the development of Christian devotional and liturgical forms' (p. 120). This identification of the Holy and the Beautiful was especially seen in mysticism. Even the understanding of pain and suffering was put into the framework of the Beautiful.

It is a good work done by Mr. Pelikan, like several others, to rehabilitate Nietzsche and put him back into the Christian-existential tradition. Nietzsche had been earlier drawn to aestheticism, but later revolted against it in every detail. His work of

trying to destroy the prevailing Christianity was then indeed a very religious work, a battle for the Holy. 'Once he had involved himself in an existential encounter with the Holy, which, like Don Juan, he sought in the Beautiful, there was no retreating and no relenting until the power of the Holy which had been unleashed overwhelmed him. This was no mild flirtation but an overwhelming passion, and once passion was turned to hatred, this too was existential' (p. 137). This insane man, the author thinks, is like the others a "fool for Christ", though he refused to be called a Christian' (p. 143).

BACH

The discussion of Bach follows the pattern, according to which the second of each set is placed as complimentary to the first. In our study of Bach we are to see how from the Holy we can pass to the Beautiful. Here then is 'a possibility of a positive relation between the Holy and the Beautiful, in which the priority of the Holy would itself be productive of an interpretation of the nature of the Beautiful' (p. 145). The beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty are antipodes. Beauty has to stand in a derivative relation to the Holy and not as genus of holiness in and of itself. It is in this context that the historical significance of Bach becomes clear (p. 146). A brief but good study of Bach's work in music is undertaken to illustrate this point. 'Bach was led by the overpowering mercy and overwhelming grace of the Holy to acknowledge a new dimension of life and value' (p. 171).

Summing up the efforts of men of all ages, particularly of Christian men, to take the Holy captive and to tame it, with their categories of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, the author observes that in fact the Holy 'is not the answer to every riddle but itself the enigma in every riddle', and then goes on to assert that 'the Holy has been made flesh and has dwelt among us in Jesus Christ' (p. 171). This is the stone that the builders rejected, 'but has become instead the corner-stone for the dwelling-place of the Most High and Most Holy, from whom there proceeds all that is True and Good and Beautiful'. Lastly, 'those who have despaired of the effort to domesticate the Holy, those whom He has led to know True and Good and Beautiful in Him—those are the fools for Christ' (p. 172).

SOME COMMENTS

I want to add a few words to this summary by way of comment. At the very start I must admit that this is a good book, one well worth reading. Mr. Pelikan has expanded a single insight into a nearly exhaustive work, and done it in such a good way that he deserves acclaim. It is a book dominated by the Holy, it is a kind of application of that discovery of Rudolph

Otto to six leading thinkers of Christianity, chosen in a fairly representative way.

But because it is a good book it deserves to be criticized. The theme he speaks about is so very true and a Christian thinker can ill afford to neglect it. But because the author is dominated, almost taken hold of, by that theme, by the Holy to be more correct, he permits himself a certain one-sidedness which is to be perceived by the reader who wants edification by reading this book so admirably presented to him. The Holy is pictured sometimes as an existential category, sometimes as an experiential category and sometimes as the uniquely Christian category, and in some places, particularly at the conclusion, as Christ Himself.

In the first place, I find it hard to equate the existential with the experiential. I know that this can be done but only by so defining experience as to change its accepted meaning. But throughout Mr. Pelikan seems to assume that the existential somehow is also the experiential. This identification is reached by treating the existential and the category of the Holy as the same. The Holy has been defined by Otto himself as the *à priori* category of religious experience. This identification is one of the implicit theses (and there are others) in the book, or perhaps one might say this is an omitted thesis. No one has said quite the same before, and it is a thesis in itself, needing a lot of proving, to establish that the existential is the same as the Holy; surely it is no matter to be assumed and passed over.

In the second place, the author's equation of the Holy with Christ seems much too simple and hence much too complicated. Are Christ and the Holy equivalent to each other without remainder? What is, again, the real content of the Christian faith? The Holy or Christ? Does the historical in Christ come under the category of the Holy? I am aware that the author would answer, as he has already said, that Christ is the Holy become flesh. One can only counter this by asserting that the Holy can be apprehended, and has been apprehended, quite apart from Christ. It seems to me that for none of the things that the author depicts as unique and distinctive of the Holy a knowledge of the historical Christ is indispensable. The book as a whole would give the impression that Christ has been superimposed on the Holy—the Holy itself incidentally is so convincingly portrayed—because Mr. Pelikan is a Christian. But what is the logic that links bindingly the Holy with Christ apart from the historical and empirical reason that the men he is discussing also thought their thoughts in a religious environment that was Christian? This is what the intelligent reader would like to know.

* * *

What I feel about all this I will state below. To talk about the Holy is to talk about God; and of Christ only by reason of

the identification of Christ with God, which is not an essential implicate of the Holy. To talk about the Holy as Pelikan does is to talk about God theologically (or better, religiously) and is not to talk about God christologically. In other words, what I mean is, while it is an essential and the highest theological or religious category, the Holy is not an essential christological category. To use it so is a mistake.

As the ultimate category of religion the Holy is to be used, as it has been used, by these six men, as the dynamic for the apprehension of Christ. (But we must maintain that they used other categories too.) And yet could we say that the awareness of the Holy is the direct product of the historical events of Christ's birth, death and resurrection? The Holy can be used in other types of religious experience also, as Otto has clearly shown. It is by definition generic. Does this not show that Christ really transcends even this category? The Holy as the highest category of religious experience is the ultimate principle of the inner criticism of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics as forms of religious experience, as they as such are in turn principles of inner criticism of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics *per se*. Likewise we may say that the existential is the principle of inner criticism of all experience (this is just to show that the existential is not the experiential) and this includes the Holy. There can be an existential apprehension of the Holy, as in Kierkegaard. Yet Christ transcends even this. Some existential awareness of the Holy, as also some other forms of religious experience, may indeed refer to Christ. But this is only an empirical fact of high historical importance but of no *à priori* and essential significance. By the same token, the experiential aspect of Christ can be inverted. It can be extended beyond the Holy, to the metaphysical, ethical and aesthetic. And yet Christ is not any of these, as Mr. Pelikan himself very lucidly shows.

However, when we speak of experience in this context, it is clear that we use the word in the narrower religious sense, connoting definite events producing objective and indubitable knowledge, and not in the broader sense of empiricist philosophy, as including thinking. If so, do we all at some time or other cut through the veil of unknowing and stand face to face with the Holy and are able to say, 'Now I see, therefore, I Know'?

* * *

In this connection the question of the dynamics of religious life and knowledge seem very serious to me. Where do we begin and how? And who initiates, we or God? I do not want a great deal of talk about God being the initiator and then to notice that it is put up to me to do some beginning. The truth is that I cannot escape the dialectic between God's initiation and mine.

I cannot see the existential resting anywhere in an actual experience (say the Holy) except in so far as the idea of such an experience constitutes a pivotal element in my thinking and talking. Is there then such a thing as existential experiential? My answer is, it cannot be. Maybe my existential is somebody else's experiential, perhaps Paul's, Kierkegaard's or Mr. Pelikan's, but not mine. Yet I know that my all-absorbing thoughts and concerns with the things that Mr. Pelikan is talking about are as though I have experienced and am experiencing them. Yet in all honesty I am not experiencing them directly and objectively as for example the Holy is to be experienced, except through the media of those things that Mr. Pelikan condemns, namely Truth, Goodness and Beauty. These last three are things about which I can think and talk without any special objective experience. The transcendent subject of experience, the Holy, thus appears to me somehow through the integrity of my thought, or if someone would object to the last word, then through the integrity of my self or personality. Thus it appears that the Holy and the integrity of thought or Self, as including Truth, Goodness and Beauty, stand to each other in some relation. This too is dialectical. Mr. Pelikan would allow that these three are legitimate, but maintains that in order to be valid they must come from the Holy and after the Holy has been apprehended. The trouble with this idea is that it makes the relation between the Holy and these three sequential or even chronological rather than dialectical.

The author is concerned to interpret the scandal of Christianity, which he thinks is the Holy. The Holy indeed is a unique religious insight, which surely it has been the portion of the Judeo-Christian tradition to discover and help all the world to see. But once all the world has seen it, they can do without the help of the Judeo-Christian tradition as they manage to do on other insights. Religious insights have no copyright. There is something in the very nature of these insights that makes them communicable without hindrance and assimilable by all without acknowledging copyrights on their discovery. This is indeed the picture that we have seen all along in history, and those of us who live in this country are seeing today. The question can repeatedly be asked, what is the scandal of Christianity? Is it the distinctiveness of its religious insights? I say, no. The only scandal of Christianity is Christ. The old question still remains unanswered, even with Mr. Pelikan's best efforts, 'what think ye of Christ?' Some of these men whom Mr. Pelikan discusses were indeed 'fools for Christ', but not simply because they knew the Holy. For them the realm of history is supremely the medium of God's revelation in Christ. It is this knowledge that makes them 'fools for Christ'. Again there is a difference between 'fools for Christ' and 'madmen for Christ', or better 'madmen for the Holy'.

Now, this critical appraisal of the central arguments of the book is the highest compliment that I pay to the author. He has said something new and provocative and original, quite different from the contents of usual theological dishes. One would like to read more of this author. Lastly, let me say that except on these points that I have raised, I am in complete agreement with him. Mr. Pelikan's is one of the really stimulating books that one nowadays chances to come across.

GRACE

'Does our doctrine of grace abolish free will? That is the last thing we wish to do: on the contrary we establish it the more firmly by this doctrine. Faith does not abolish the law: no more does grace abolish free will: because grace heals the will, by which righteousness is voluntarily loved.'

ST. AUGUSTINE

Book Reviews

God's People in India: by J. W. Grant. The Ryerson Press, Toronto. (Available from Blackie & Son Ltd., 285J Bowbazar Street, Calcutta 12.) Pp. xi + 112. Rs.17/25.

The author gives in this book some of his impressions of Indian Church life. He spent a year as a visiting professor in the United Theological College, Bangalore. It is a very refreshing book to read, because for us in India we have gathered together in this book the various problems and opportunities for the Church in India today.

The titles of the ten chapters are: The Strangeness of Missions, The Indian Response to Christ, The Indian Christian Community, The Desire for an Indian Church, Telling India the Good News, Indian Ways of Worship, Towards an Indian Theology, Western Mission and Indian Church, The Church in the New India, and India and the Church of Tomorrow. These titles testify to the fact that the author, with amazing skill, has been able to understand, within the short period of his stay in India, the nature of the life and mission of the Church in India today. What he says in these chapters interprets clearly, both for the Indian Christian and for Christians from the West in India, how the worship, work and witness of the Indian Church should be understood and interpreted. As the author points out, there are no clear-cut answers to the problems that confront the Indian Church. According to the author, we in India must remember 'that we are called not to make Christ acceptable to India but to let Christ speak freely to India's heart: not to water down the Christian heritage in India but to enable India to offer up her culture to Christ'. He also adds: 'The Church is called to live boldly the supernatural life God has imparted to it and to share that life in loving identification with the people of India.'

In the concluding chapter, the author, while recognizing that the mysterious wisdom and spirituality of the East has reached Western Christians through non-Christians from India, describes with many new insights what the Church in India has already contributed to Christians of the West in other ways. This chapter needs to be studied and pondered over, in order that we may really become worthy of our contributions to the Western Church as listed by the author.

The book will prove to be an admirable introduction to those who want to know about the Indian Church in general, although it must be admitted that neither the Roman Catholic Church in

India nor the Orthodox Church in India is dealt with. It is a book that could be used with profit as a study-circle discussion book on 'The Church in India Today' in our own parish groups.

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B. MANUEL

The Silence of St. Thomas: Three Essays: by Josef Pieper.
Faber & Faber. Pp. 125. 12s. 6d.

For many people, the name of St. Thomas Aquinas conjures up visions of dry-as-dust theology, and an attempted philosophical justification of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It is therefore a good thing that Professor Pieper has put as the first of this collection of essays, a brief biography, which shows us a living, loving man, involved in a family quarrel because he insisted on joining the unfashionable Dominicans rather than becoming a Benedictine monk at Monte Cassino. The unpopularity he incurred at Paris as a champion of the Mendicant Orders against the secular clergy led the University to boycott his inaugural lecture: but his winning way, and the clarity of his lectures, made him one of the most popular teachers on the University. It is against a background of ceaseless teaching, travelling, and controversy, that we must see him writing his great works; and for a corrective to a judgement of arid intellectualism, we must recall also the warm devotion of his hymns, composed for the Feast of Corpus Christi, such as 'Adoro Te devote, latens Deitas', familiar to English-speaking church-goers in the translation, 'Thee we adore, O hidden Saviour, Thee'; incidentally we see here how the intensely personal devotion is modified in translation by the substitution of the plural for the singular.

It is not always realized that his great *Summa Theologica* was left incomplete, and the reason for its non-completion reveals to us the humility of the great teacher. As a result of a vision, or a revelation, he came to recognize the inadequacy of words to convey the truths of God: 'I can write no more', he said to his devoted companion and amanuensis; 'all that I have hitherto written seems to me nothing but straw . . . compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me.'

But still the *Summa* stands, a monument of devoted learning. If there are parts of it which seem to us dull, and not related to our present situation, and even places where it is in error, there is yet much that we may learn, and not least the temper of patient marshalling of facts and arguments, and a real devotion to the pursuit of truth. Professor Pieper quotes from one of St. Thomas' commentaries on Aristotle: 'The study of philosophy does not mean to learn what others have thought, but to learn what is the truth of things.'

Perhaps the most important element in this book is Professor Pieper's discussion of the place of the doctrine of creation in

St. Thomas' thought. He shows how it underlies all his thinking, and explains what seem to people trained in other traditions to be sudden jumps in his argument. Every writer (like every age) has a peculiar set of presuppositions, which we need to discover if we are to understand what he is saying. For St. Thomas, things exist, things are true, things are knowable, because they have been creatively thought by God ; and for the same reason, there is an intrinsic unknowability (if the word may be allowed) in all things, because they are themselves the creation of a Creator who has depths in himself which no creature can penetrate. It is in the light of this basic doctrine of creation that the vexed question of the relation of mind to reality is approached, and the reality (albeit a dependent reality) and the independence (although a given independence) of the creation are taken into full account in the discussion of the way in which man can have a real, though limited, knowledge of the world about him. After the somewhat arid discussions of some modern philosophers, it is refreshing to find that the robust attitude of common sense can still be justified on philosophical grounds.

But with all this, there is still an insistence on the unknowability of the essence of things: human knowledge can be true, but it is never adequate. The important thing is that the human mind, contemplating created things, should always be drawn from them to the consideration of the Creator, who alone understands perfectly their relation to the whole of reality.

The translation by Daniel O'Connor reads easily, and though in places the argument needs close application, the book is one which will richly reward the effort made to understand it. For those to whom the bulk and style of St. Thomas' writings are an obstacle, Professor Pieper provides a valuable introduction to, and discussion of, certain important aspects of St. Thomas' thought, and shows how it bears on some of the more recent developments of European philosophy.

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W. B. MADDAN

Symbolism in the Bible and the Church : by Gilbert Cope. S.C.M. Press, London. (Available at Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta.) Pp. 287. Rs. 24/-.

Symbolism is a factor of the first importance in religion as it runs through the whole of life. Symbolic things and actions provide for the needs of the whole man. These have been powerful in past ages. But have they a genuine significance in our own time ? Does the imagery of the Bible correspond to our present understanding of the human psyche and its total environment ? Have they any meaning in this post-Darwinian, post-Freudian, post-Einsteinian age ? The author raises these questions and it is the thesis of his book that the imagery and symbolism of the Bible

and the Church are 'valid and effective still—perhaps even more so now that the rational analysis of human consciousness and natural environment has disclosed such a vast realm of mystery and ineffability' (p. 12). 'There is a growing realization that visual religious imagery is psychologically significant in ways never previously analysed' (p. 46). It is all the more important therefore that we have a clear understanding of their significance. But has the Church, the guardian of a particular pattern which has proved of saving power to many, faced up to her task? The author rightly diagnoses, 'In its anxiety to avoid a superstitious regard for liturgical substance or religious imagery, Protestantism generally has underestimated the value of symbols to the psyche of most people, whereas the Catholic tradition very easily slips over into the treacherous realm of magic and fetishism. Somewhere a middle way must be found so that the ministry of the word and the ministry of the sacraments are indissolubly linked, and the idolatrous veneration of either book or bread is avoided' (p. 275).

For this reason we cannot simply go back to the ways of thinking which preceded the scientific approach. 'We must', the author insists, 'go forward, and, on our own new levels of understanding, we may well find that the ancient religious wisdom can have effective expression'.

This is just what he has done in this remarkable book. He has brought under his rational analysis typology, Christian art, icons, idolatry, such psychological types as dreams and visions, family and social relationships as related to psychology, sex and religion, Church architecture, symbolism in worship, the place of drama in the Church, and other topics. In this brief review it is not possible to evaluate all the insights the author has brought out on these subjects; the book is full of them. Here is one: 'By its historically understandable emphasis upon the individual and his reason, Protestantism has, nevertheless, impoverished the valuable symbolism of the Hebrew-Christian tradition. In its successful attacks on idolatry it has virtually destroyed much of the psychologically precious imagery. But men cannot live without imagery, and if the good imagination is denied the evil imagination will obtrude . . . If men may not meditate in church or chapel upon the beauty and virtues of womanhood, they will gloat in cinema or music-hall on surreptitious glimpses of female anatomy' (p. 138).

One may disagree with the author, and ask if there is much to regret if the Protestant Churches have discarded the traditional Christian font-rituals which give full expression to the sexual aspects of the regenerative process of baptism. His observation that 'romantic love, that major preoccupation of modern Western civilization, with one exception finds no place in the Bible' (p. 141) is too sweeping a statement and can be accepted only if such attempts of Jacob for Rachel are to be excluded from romance. Also, while appreciating Mr. Cope's critical rational analysis it

should, however, be pointed out that though he readily grants in principle that a genuine symbol cannot be completely rationalized (p. 84), the mysterious elements in the symbols do not find sufficient emphasis in his treatise.

The book is written with the Western background, but that does not minimize its significance to us in India today. The synthesis of Greek and Hebrew culture has been achieved in Christianity. Such a task in relation to Indian culture and thought is yet to be done. To us who are actually involved in the establishment of churches, in the nurture of converts in the Christian faith, in the building of churches, the creation of new Church traditions in our united Churches the book has much valuable information.

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A. D. MANUEL

Allegory and Event: A study of the sources and significance of Origen's interpretation of Scripture: by R. P. C. Hanson. S.C.M. Press. (Available from the Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, Calcutta.) Pp. 374 plus indexes. 35s.

This book is a study of Origen and his Patristic and New Testament background. But it raises questions of perennial importance and particular relevance to theological study today. It falls into three sections, The Sources of Christian Allegory, Origen as an Exegete and Origen as an Allegorist.

The first part of the book gives a valuable and detailed analysis of various kinds of figurative interpretation practised in Palestine, Rabbinic Judaism and Alexandria. A fundamental distinction is drawn between typology, where an event of the present is seen as the fulfilment of a previous similar historical situation, and allegory, where a record of the past is given a meaning other than its literal one without any reference to similarity of situation between the original and the allegorical interpretation. The former has some pre-Christian examples in Palestinian Judaism (including the Dead Sea Scrolls), whereas the latter is characteristic of Philo, and has affinities with the Hellenistic treatment of Homer. Dr. Hanson shows clearly that it is typology which is the overwhelmingly predominant New Testament usage, though the distinction is not a hard and fast one, and not every one will be convinced by his attempt to demonstrate that the famous passage on Hagar and Sarah in Galatians 4 is 'situation-typology'. The allegorical method of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, moreover, shows great regard for the historicity of the Old Dispensation and is relating its details to the historic revelation in Christ, rather than drawing from it general moralizing in the style of Philo. The latter's influence in *Hebrews* (contrary to the view of Spicq) must be entirely discounted. The New Testament student will

welcome Dr. Hanson's discussion of allegory in the New Testament and his excellent analysis of the relations between *Hebrews*, Stephen's speech in Acts 7 and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. It is, however, a little confusing to be told that these writings, which emanate from Alexandria, do not exhibit much 'Alexandrian' allegory, until one realizes that by 'Alexandrian' Dr. Hanson means, reasonably enough, 'Philonic' or 'Hellenistic'.

The upshot of the discussion is to give weighty and documented support to the distinction between typology and allegory already drawn by Professor Lampe (in *Essays on Typology*) and to provide us with materials for establishing some sort of norm for the proper use of these methods, by which we may judge present-day revivals of typological exegesis.

The middle section of the book raises a further key problem in the two chapters on Inspiration and Accommodation. On the one hand, no one before Origen had formulated in quite such clear or uncompromising terms the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of Scripture. On the other, no one had previously made such a thoroughgoing attempt to rationalize and explain away the literal meaning of unacceptable passages. Dr. Hanson shows that Origen found no contradiction here because of his faith in God's method of 'accommodating' His truth to our infantile minds, and in his own ability to pierce to the true meaning by means of allegory. There is surely a warning here to those who claim that a Fundamentalist view of Scripture is the only one sanctioned by tradition and orthodoxy. Much in Origen's teaching will support them, but much would scandalize. Dr. Hanson provides a challenge to reassessment in the light of the fact that Origen's doctrine of inspiration was drawn more from the Hellenistic Jew, Philo, than from the Bible itself or Christian tradition.

The final section of the book takes up the discussion of typology and allegory begun in the first, and applies it in detail to Origen's voluminous writings. The key principle is that Origen learned from Clement of Alexandria the Philonic method of allegory. He thus rejected the typology of earlier tradition, and developed moralizing and spiritualizing allegory which virtually abandoned the historical rootedness of Biblical faith. Dr. Hanson particularizes his treatment under the headings Historicity, The Law, Sacraments, and Eschatology (why not also, at least, Atonement?). Each chapter contains many good things but the main argument may be summarized by the two phrases History and Allegory and History and Experience.

Dr. Hanson shows that Origen virtually substituted allegory for history, and in so doing deserted the Biblical faith which we now see as Heilsgeschichte. Every part of the Bible comes to bear the same meaning as every other part, and the whole is transmuted into moral and spiritual truths. Origen's treatment of 1 John 1:1 is typical and fatally damaging,—No one would be

so silly as to imagine that this text should not be taken allegorically', he says. Dr. Hanson's strictures on those who would defend Origen on this point are entirely justified.

But what was once for all accomplished in history must be applied to the believer. Origen as pastor and man of prayer was deeply concerned to establish the link between Scripture and the Christian experience, and at this point one feels that Dr. Hanson is lacking in flexibility. His vehement and right insistence on the principle of 'historical revelation' perhaps prevents him seeing the positive value of Origen's attempt to grapple with a very real problem. Granted, Origen was radically wrong in abandoning history. Nevertheless, many passages which Dr. Hanson rejects as 'false spiritualizing' have more value than he allows. The application of the sacramental principle to the whole of life on the basis of John 6, for example, is surely *part* of the valid exegesis here. When Origen writes (Hanson's summary), 'For every believer in his religious experience the veil is rent, the earth moves, the rocks are split, the tombs open, and so on to every detail of the Passion and Resurrection', may he not be giving graphic expression to Paul's 'if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his'? Moreover, much of Origen's 'generalizing' interpretation of Christ's words to Peter ('on this rock . . .') and his emphasis on the 'sacrament of the Word' has a good deal of Reformation and post-Reformation support. Dr. Hanson rejects all this either explicitly or by implication, but one wonders what are the implications of his own affirmation that the Incarnation is 'the final and unique event, *contemporary to all men and women*' (p. 364). This type of statement is commonly made, but the meaning of its second half (*italics mine*) is by no means self-evident. Indeed it seems to this reviewer a quite crucial obscurity (or omission) in much present-day insistence on an 'historical revelation'. Dr. Hanson would have helped us even more if his book had contained a more patient analysis of this idea of the contemporaneity of the Incarnation and the Cross in relation to Origen's teaching and what we may roughly call 'the devotional use of the Bible'. It might have led to a more positive appraisal of Origen himself on this point: he is surely dealing with a similar problem.

This book contains much of interest and value to the non-specialist. How far it will satisfy as a technical contribution to Patristic study, I am not qualified to say. It is a work of erudition and authority, based on a minute study of Origen's writings and the literature about him. In general one may observe that it marks a reaction against recent French scholars (represented in English translation by J. Danielou) who have attempted to claim Origen for full orthodoxy, and his methods as largely legitimate. Dr. Hanson's work is much closer (with important reservations) to that of De Faye, who wrote, 'Origen is a Christian philosopher

who imagines he is explaining the Scriptures whereas he is really exploiting them on behalf of his own dogmatic teaching'.

A pleasing minor feature is Dr. Hanson's success in giving up-to-date equivalents for Greek expressions. For example τὰ παιδίων φρονούσιν becomes 'live in the world of childhood' and ἀμαθία is rendered 'gaucheness'. Unfortunately breathings and accents have slipped in one or two places (read ὅρμαι for ὅρμαι p. 37, and τί for τὶ and αὐτῇ for αὐτῇ p. 276).

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J. C. HINDLEY

The Ramakrishna Movement. The World Mission of Hinduism : by V. C. Samuel. (Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore.) Pp. 35.

This C.I.S.R.S. booklet is a useful addition to the series of very informative and apostolically constructive monographs brought out by the Bangalore Institute. As Father Samuel writes in his introduction, it is 'an attempt to give a brief account of the history, religious principles and activities of the Ramakrishna Movement'; this exposition is followed by a Christian evaluation which states the 'honest difficulties' (the writer likes understatement) of a Christian regarding the religious doctrines and attitudes characteristic of this neo-Hindu sect.

Ramakrishna was a deeply religious soul, and his 'sayings' contain much that is genuinely beautiful; they are explained, with the help of a thousand comparisons, in a language which the simplest people can grasp. He was intensely emotional and passionately in love with Kali his 'Mother'. He constantly inveighed against lust and greed, he derided the dry learning of the Westernized intellectuals of his time. In his religious experiences, he eclectically gathered many popular Hindu traditions and followed the most diverse spiritual guides, being at the same time a Vedantin and a bhakta, a tantrika shakta and a vaishnava. He was simple as a child but he had a deep common sense in matters of spiritual life. He was humble, he prayed God for forgiveness and grace, strongly rebuked those who showed exaggerated respect towards him. Tolerant and patient, he exalted the value of sincerity, at times belittling the objective importance of truth; he often repeated that all spiritual paths can lead to the supreme realization. He was an ecstatic, his ecstasies and trances becoming more and more frequent as he went; he seems to have been nervously exhausted on account of long tantra practices under the guidance of dubious gurus, his purity remaining unscathed but his health being gravely affected. Hindu revivalism and, in particular, the Ramakrishna Mission have magnified him into a new Saviour of the World; the neo-Hindu reaction against Christianity systematically exploits his name, making of him a new Christ.

The Gospels have been largely drawn upon to build up the Ramakrishna legend.

Swami Vivekananda was an ardent soul, a fiery social reformer, a passionate nationalist but he was neither a deep and original thinker nor a contemplative. He did much to turn the minds of Hindu India towards social service and humanitarian work, trying to infuse into Vedanta a positive outlook. His attention was focused on man rather than on the Absolute: his thought was profoundly influenced by Western Positivism.

Father Samuel's portraits of Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are sympathetically and clearly drawn. I believe that he has depended too much upon the 'official' biographies; he might have been somewhat more critical in his acceptance of sources and documents. Little critical work has been done so far on these texts. From the first Life published in Bengali by Ramachandra Datta in 1890 to the official Biography of 1925, there have been many additions and variations, and a purposeful re-shaping of the holy man's Life. Precious evidence from Brahmo and Christian witnesses is available, but generally ignored by the biographers. Of course, the aim of the writer was not to give us a full-fledged biography of Ramakrishna; yet, the recourse to different sources would have made him more wary. For instance, it is not a fact that Ramakrishna 'had a desire to know at first-hand the essence of Islam and Christianity', at least this is not certain at all. We only know that, in 1866, for a few days, he practised some Muslim rites and lived exteriorly like a Muslim; similarly, in 1872, a Brahmo friend read to him some passages of the Bible and, having seen in the house of a Vaishnava a picture of the Madonna, he was, for three days, absorbed in 'Christian' thoughts. He is also said to have had a vision of Christ, but he had so many visions. In fact, he never studied Islam or Christianity.

The writer succinctly analyses the 'theology' of the Movement; this brief account is accurate and clear. Yet, here also, the author has followed too closely the official literature of the Movement; the Math and the Mission rather emphasize the philosophical aspects of their doctrine than the properly religious element. I think that the most important 'theological' factor is the divinization of Ramakrishna: he is worshipped as more-than-an-avatara, the Supreme, and the intense bhakti of which he is the object is more important than the diluted and modernistic Vedanta which is proposed to the world as its new and universal Gospel.

Regarding Advaita Vedanta, the author, while describing objectively the main tenets of Swami Vivekananda's ideology, has not sufficiently shown the difference which exists between the Advaita of Sankara and that of the Swami. The Self of the Upanishads and of the classical Vedanta is not on the same level as this man-centred and often shallow humanism.

Father Samuel calls Swami Vivekananda 'a gigantic personality'. Not all religious Hindus would agree. Dynamic, intensely patriotic, bitter and unbalanced in his condemnation of the West, the Swami was a very important man, a powerful leader; God alone knows the rest.

The 'Christian evaluation' which the writer gives us of this Movement is very objective. The spirit of devotion and the selflessness shown by the monks of the Order is rightly praised. The fact that the members of this organization never tried to understand objectively Christian doctrine and tradition is pointed out, and the great difference between the Hindu 'realization' and Christian Faith is well explained, as also the impossibility to bring about a synthesis of Māyāvāda and the creation doctrine or the Vedantin idea of man and the Christian anthropology.

As the Ramakrishna Movement represents an important neo-Hindu development and a challenge to Christianity, this sympathetic, objective and simple exposition will be of great help to all Christian workers in India.

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PIERRE FALLON, S.J.

A North India Comment on Relations Between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches: by Rev. William Stewart. (Printed by Hedderwick Kirkwood Ltd., 59-65 Mitchell Street, Glasgow, C. 1.) Pp. 15. Price 9d.

This booklet is written with particular reference to the 'Joint Report on Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches', produced some time back by a Joint Commission in Great Britain.

The Rev. William Stewart is a well-known writer and theologian. He has taken an active part in the negotiations for Church Union in N. India and speaks with wide experience and intensive study over a number of years.

The author is deeply thankful that the churches of the West are seriously grappling with the problem of the unity of the Church and that many aspects of the 'Plan of Union' in the N. India negotiations are confirmed by the Report. He is also happy that there is no attempt to form a single 'Church of Great Britain'. The purpose of his booklet is to point out 'certain serious differences between the approach underlying the Report and that adopted in India'.

The chief criticism of the author on the Report is that while the task of the Commission was to investigate 'those changes in the Churches which would be requisite for the goal of the re-integration of the whole Church of Christ', it has confined itself to the conditions for a recognition between the separate national churches. This may be because the changes suggested in the Report are, according to the Commission, the changes necessary

as the first step towards such a re-integration. But it is unfortunate that the investigation practically ended with a search for changes necessary within *still divided churches* and that it did not cover the whole question of church union.

The most important change proposed is the acceptance of episcopacy by the Presbyterian churches and eldership by episcopal churches. As the author points out, the crux of the problem is the order in which these things should happen. While in the Church of S. India this change was realized and applied *within union*, the recommendation of the Report is to have it as a *preliminary* to union. In the former case it is a 'union by comprehension' whereas the latter is only a 'union by persuasion'.

The danger of the former approach is, as Prof. Stewart points out, that it smacks too much of a stricture on the whole life of a church which has nurtured men in faith through centuries and which in the Providence of God has been used as any other church to bring men to the salvation in Christ. The experience of the C.S.I. has clearly shown that the change is best effected *within* the united Church and not insisted upon as a prerequisite to the act of union.

According to the author, such a change as is required by the Report could come either voluntarily by reformation within as an inner necessity or through an actual event of union. But, as Prof. Stewart remarks, 'the Report advocates it as a requisite for others to enter relations of such inter-communion as would be proper within one Catholic Church.' No doubt, this will be resented to as a dictation from without and will only lead to unnecessary resistance and bitter opposition from the other party.

The author then goes on to raise the more fundamental question whether our divisions are 'schisms' within the Catholic Church or whether they are divisions which separate us from that Church. To us it seems nothing short of arrogance and audacity to take the latter view, when God in His grace has acknowledged them also as within the Church. Although it is not explicitly so stated, by implication the Report seems to be inclined to take the latter view. The amazing fact is that episcopacy has been taken for granted to be the very *esse* of the Church, without which a Church cannot be deemed to be truly Catholic—a position to which many in the Church of England itself will not subscribe. If these assertions be true, no union is ever possible between episcopal Church and a non-episcopal Church. The Report asserts that from 'the Anglican side it was clear that full inter-communion and unity could not be realized apart from Episcopacy'. The question has been rightly asked by the author, 'Is this the authoritative statement of the Anglican position?'

There is also another serious difficulty in the proposal of accepting episcopacy as a prerequisite of union. How is the non-episcopal Church to receive it? By consecration at the hands of the Anglican bishops! Apart from the assumption that the bishops of one Church can consecrate persons to be bishops in

another Church, it also implies an interpretation of the episcopate which 'makes it, uniquely, constitutive of the Church'.

Prof. Stewart also deals with the problem of the relation between union and inter-communion. Here again the most important question is which should precede the other? Though there may be weighty arguments on both sides, the experience in S. India clearly shows that inter-communion paves the way to union and does not hinder it in any real measure.

In Part VII of the booklet Prof. Stewart deals with some of the suggestions regarding the way ahead. He points out that there is 'no proper Biblical statement regarding the nature of the Church which would set out the real ground on which negotiations for visible unity can take place'. He rightly affirms that 'it (the real ground) is the mighty fact of our corporation into the body of Christ, the act of God Himself, directly expressed in our Baptism which already binds us together indissolubly "in Christ" and compels us to urgent action to remove the offence of those visible divisions which contradict the truth of what we are . . . So our task is essentially not one of arduous construction but is the basically simple humble one of penitent acceptance'.

The Report explains that the Commission has initially concentrated on a relation between the episcopalians and Presbyterians, because the differences these Churches are facing lie at the heart of other divisions within the body of Christ and a notable act of reconciliation here is sure to have far-reaching results. According to the author, this concern has led the Commission to a preoccupation with the particular matters contained in the Report and a treatment of them 'not so much in the essential situation of the urgent need for open unity in one territory as in a general debate on "requisites" for unity in the whole field of ecumenical relationships. Unfortunately this leads to concentration on their differences or order, etc., as if this and not disunity itself were the real trouble'. He would therefore rather begin 'not with these wide theological debates but with the direct question of how the Churches stand to one another then in their own parish'. While this is true, it is also true that the problem, with which the Commission grappled, is to a large extent a vital question in connection with a union with other non-episcopal Churches as well. Any advance here would, no doubt, mean a signal progress to the whole movement of reunion. However, the right and fruitful way of approach seems to be to begin with a proper Biblical understanding of the Church and then go on to a discussion of the place of ministry not vice versa.

Finally, the author emphasizes the great need for 'earnest and sustained work' to be done, which will draw together members of Churches till the fact of what they have in common, as Christians, towers over the prejudice and suspicions which so long have kept them apart. He also calls for a bolder approach and a solemn resolve to achieve reconciliation and unity when it comes to a matter of actual negotiations.

The chief criticism one can level against the Report is that it wants to make Anglican and Presbyterian Churches more like one another structurally *while they remain separate*. Only within achieved union can we truly grow together, and experience shows us that such important structural changes can be profitably discussed only within a definite plan of union. As Bishop Newbigin has said: 'the healing which we need cannot be accomplished by merely piecing together our broken structures. It must be the whole body of the faithful that grows together into one.'

This booklet was very much a 'tract for the times' published in Scotland in the midst of an acrimonious debate touched off by the publication of the Commission's Report. Now the debate has moved on and this year the Church of Scotland has officially repudiated the Report; we think for wrong reasons. However, there is a good deal of useful matter of permanent value in this booklet, since it deals with some of the fundamental principles rather than with particular non-essentials of Church union. We therefore recommend it heartily to every one who is interested in Church union.

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